THE PACIFIC
Commercial Advertiser

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Killing the lantana with a scale-bug may also kill the coffee trees. People in the agricultural line, before making radical moves, should consult the experts.

Pearl Harbor will be a busy place in a few years. The 1,200 workmen who are likely to be put in motion at the navy yard mean a new white population of between five and six thousand. Naturally commerce will seek the big port and a thriving town will grow up on its beach. The future plans for Oahu railway improvement have already been outlined here and they indicate the probable trend of commercial enterprise on all sides.

AN EXPORT FALLACY.

The substitute-for-sugar discussion draws out this interesting letter:

Honolulu, Aug. 19, 1901.

Editor Advertiser: There have recently appeared in the Advertiser two editorials dealing with the question of diversified products. The writer of these, stimulated to argumentative zeal by extreme statements in a hostile sheet, has, I believe, gone beyond the legitimate purpose of his plea, in writing so hopelessly, and indeed disparagingly, of the attempt at the production of anything other than sugar. In so doing, he has done injustice to certain interests of the Islands.

Upon the profits of sugar a large mercantile and economic structure has been built up. To cripple the sugar industry would be to undermine this structure, and it is out of the question to imagine that any other industry or combination of industries would immediately rise to take the place of sugar.

At the same time it is not true, as some people insist, and as one might infer from the editorial in this morning's Advertiser, that "outside" industries are, a priori, doomed to failure.

In the past the brains of the Islands have been devoted to sugar, and to enterprises dependent directly upon it. The margin of profit was so great that nothing better was to be looked for, and it certainly did not pay people to bother themselves much about the prices they paid for potatoes and onions. Such outside enterprises as were undertaken previous to annexation seem not to have been really well handled.

Conditions are now changing. As we approach the prospect of eventual smaller profits in sugar, business enterprise is turning to other channels. How far this change will go we cannot foresee. That we shall reach the condition of an Eastern manufacturing town is not possible. That we have reached the point where an American farmer can make an independent living by raising truck for market, has not been proved. It is an open question whether the same amount of intelligence and enterprise which has established the quality of the Washington Navel orange in the Eastern markets would not establish the Hawaiian orange, or produce here an orange that could be established, in the markets of the country.

We do know, however, that we now have an apparently successful brickyard, and that there is a pineapple cannery actually in operation and making money, with the prospect of the industry developing into hundreds if not thousands of acres. Insignificant, comparatively, as these items appear, they show the trend of things, and the Advertiser should not stand in the way of progress of this kind.

Yours respectfully,

A. B. C.

The Advertiser has never doubted the ability of the small farmer in Hawaii to raise enough fruits and vegetables to support himself and to reduce the cost of living here, but it objects decidedly to the argument that sugar could be abandoned with the result that prosperity equal to that of the present or approximating one-fiftieth part of it, could be had from sending fruits and vegetables to the glutted markets of California, Oregon and Washington.

Our correspondent has a place at Wahiawa. We hope and believe he will profit by it. But if he raises fruit to send to California he must first pay the cost of its transportation to Honolulu. He will then take the loading risks which always destroy a percentage of his consignment. Next he will pay the heavy steamer charges to San Francisco and when his wares arrive there and drayage has been paid, they will be levied on for commissions by agents who have him at their mercy and are generally soulless in their charges. We could write a lay book of Revelations about the hapless experience of Southern California farmers in trying to realize on their fruit, honey and vegetables in the San Francisco market, but 500 miles away; yes, and of the ruin of fruit and vegetable growers in the San Joaquin, not two hundred miles from the metropolitan center. Yet we are asked to believe that Hawaii, 2,100 miles from the Coast, can sell oranges, pineapples, onions and squashes and what-not there in a way to make a fortune. Why, we can't even make money from export bananas; and as for pineapples in cans Captain Kidwell fought out that question long ago and finally retired from the field in disgust. The first obstacle he met was a combine of buyers to compel him to take $1.50 per dozen for his superior canned goods; and while he forced them above that price it took a continual warfare with the men who controlled the market to get fair returns. As for pineapples in their natural state the market scored the cultivator a loss.

Our correspondent does not gain much by his reference to the brickyard. That plant does not make bricks for export, but for home use. It is doing with its product what the small farmer must do with his.

The hope of tropical countries is in some great staple, produced by cheap labor and always salable at a good price. For us that staple is sugar. There is nothing to take its place now on the export lists and the things least likely to do so in future are those which are produced in abundance close to the market we must seek. Coffee we may do something with when Congress puts a tariff about it; the rubber tree is full of potentialities; the vanilla bean grows here as a trellis plant and might be reared into an export commodity on the scale of $6 per pound. Tobacco might be tried. Experiments with these things would be the part of wisdom; but to try and build up a trade with California in products which that State raises abundantly or which she can buy in a cheaper market than this one, strikes us as a sad misuse of energy.

RACE LINES AFLOAT

The eagerness of the Japanese under-officers on the Maru steamers to get rid of their white superiors and put the vessels entirely in Japanese hands is what might be looked for among people whose belief in their intellectual equality and in their expert knowledge of whatever trades or professions they essay brooks no question from the white race. A trained Japanese navigator thinks himself the peer of any sailor afloat and from experience with him under critical circumstances, on distant seas, both in peace and war, this writer is much inclined to think that he does not overestimate his powers. Japanese naval men in education, technical skill, courage and resource are all that naval men should be, and we believe the seamen of the merchant marine, barring their attitude toward white co-laborers and officers, are equally competent within their sphere. But the presence of white men, on ships bearing their flag, and in relations of command, is keenly resented by the Japanese. The feeling on the Maru steamers can be observed by any passenger; and in the course of the steerage disturbance reported elsewhere it seems to have taken a form not far removed from mutiny. When Japanese firemen can chase white steerage passengers about the deck and threaten their lives and, by the favor of native under-officers, escape double irons, it is time for the owners of the line to interfere and take stern measures to establish discipline.

The reason why the Toyo Kisen Kaisha and the Nippon Yusen Kaisha lines employ white men in the most responsible positions on their trans-Pacific vessels is the very good one that other white people would not travel on nor entrust valuable freight to steamers officered and manned by Orientals. The initiated would, but they are few. For ourselves we should feel as safe at sea under trained Japanese navigators as under those of any other nation; but the great majority of white men think otherwise and while they do so Asiatic steamship companies, doing business with them, would do well to respect their prejudices. Having acknowledged that a white captain, mates, purser and chief engineer are essential to the business success of their line, the owners of the Toyo Kaisen Kaisha, by the same token, should compel respect for their authority. As well have Oriental officers throughout as to have white officers whom the Japanese underlings do not respect and obey.

The Advertiser has none but the best wishes for the Toyo Kisen Kaisha. The Maru ships in speed, stability, freedom from rolling and quality of service have no acknowledged superiors on the Pacific ocean. But we warn the company that the growing insubordination of its Japanese petty officers and men may prove disastrous to its American passenger and freight trade.

WILL NOT WORK.

That white men will not work in the cane fields is just as true as that they can do so. Trials have been made. White men have been brought to the estates and given employment in the various branches of the industry in the past. Some came under contract and stayed until they had lived out that term. What became of them then? They sought the towns and there they stay, except those who became, through some force of character, lunas and stay to direct the labors of the coolies. With so many instances which might be cited it seems that there must be something behind the iteration of the charge of bad faith on the part of the plantation men, in endeavoring to secure labor which may stay in the fields, rather than a pure desire to see an American citizenship in these Islands.

It is not necessary to go far to find instances of the desertion of the plantations by white laborers. Take the Portuguese. Almost all the men of this race came here for the purpose of working in the fields, and they did so so long as their contracts held. How many of them at once deserted their hoes and cutting knives for the towns is a matter of a census rather than of argument. They are of the most industrious citizens. They work hard and long, but even they would not stick to the stripping of cane, and the harder work of loading it on the cars. Nor are they alone in this. There have been tried in the past other nationalities.

There were the Galicians, whose trials gave food for so much thought and talk two years ago. They knew to what they were coming, and yet it was found that they would not stand the work in the fields. Not long ago there were brought here a party of men from Boston, many of them American citizens. They accepted the free ride across continent and ocean, but it is a matter of local history that as soon as they landed they refused to carry out their contracts and work on the estates, but deserted and hunted work in the towns, and for some days were objects of charity in this city. Other parties of Portuguese recruited from the ranks of the mill-hands of the New England States have been sent here in the past and in almost every instance they soon discovered that they were not for that kind of work and found their way into the city, where they are now giving their attention to the minor trades or work upon the streets or at other unskilled labor. Even the Porto Rican, whose condition here is so vastly superior to that in his own country, is talking of what he could do if he could get hold of a small piece of land, and it is said to be a fact that there are some of them who are figuring upon how to get into planting—tobacco is their favorite crop—on their own account. This is the result of the Spanish blood, which is cropping out. Italians have found it wiser for them to devote their time to seeking work in the city than to continue in the fields.

It is, then, a matter of desire and inclination on the part of the man with white blood in his veins, that he will not work in the fields—not that he cannot. The work requires a degree of close attention and is so exhaustive that none of the Caucasians will follow it. Yet it is a matter of daily comment that the planters should find young Americans to go into the cane and work as do the Orientals. The first question which would be raised would be the matter of compensation. There is now a dearth of men to till the farms of the East at wages ranging from $18 to $24 a month and found. For this sum what do the men have? They are in a community which offers cheap living and many advantages which are absolutely impossible upon a plantation.

Again, they have only certain seasons when they are busy, for during the rest season, when the snows are on the ground, they have light labors and their pay goes on at a rate equal to that which is paid to the plantation man. Leaving the matter of compensation out of the question, it is next to impossible for the farmer to find any one who will work in his harvest fields, for the reason that other lines, especially the manufacturing field, have drawn upon the supply until there is no longer a contented young farmer class. The young men seek the city for its varied life, for its opportunities and for its amusements, forsaking the business to which they were born, and yet it is said here that these very young men, and the young women who of the same education and rank follow them, will come to the isolation of a plantation and work the whole year round, deprived of their accustomed pleasures and the opportunities for education in the university settlements and the libraries, for the purpose of growing up with the country.

If the shortage of labor in the older States was sectional or local to some one district there might be found a reason for this abandoning of the farm for the mill, but it is widespread. From the South comes the call for the Chinese to till the fields. From the Middle States there is a similar demand that there be given more men for the fields and mines. From the West where grain fields were not reaped as they should have been and when, and the wheat was lost often because it could not be garnered, there is a question as to who gains by this exclusion of the cheap workman, and even in California where the agitation started and gained its first life there exists a difference of opinion as to the desirability of keeping down the supply in the labor market so that a few may benefit at the expense of the many.

With this condition staring the people in the face, then, it will be a point of sentiment largely as to the admission of the Chinese. In the trades there can be no question of the undesirability of the coolie. He is imitative and will take possession of the entire field if he can. He will thus be brought into contact with a class of labor in which America has pride, the artisan. But may the Oriental coolie be kept in his place in the ranks of the field laborer? If he can there will be more development follow his introduction, and here in Hawaii there will return the prosperity of the former days, when the crops were tended and tilled and harvested without the constant danger of losses by reason of the cane souring in the ground for lack of men to cut and mill it. If the white man will not work in the field shall the field perforce have no laborer?

About one in ten of the people who come to Honolulu and call themselves traveling Christian workers who "wish to study our institutions," fill the Mainland press with libels about us afterwards. Hypocrisy in religious garb infests all Christian communities, this one in particular. Often our good people entertain those who deserve it and even an angel unawares, but they are taken in at many a turn by some religious pretender, male or female, who merely wants to exploit them.

Every time Mr. Carnegie gives a million to a library he intensifies the bitterness of the iron and steel strikers. Great displays of wealth made by the employers of these men with their help, brought on the present difficulty. Mr. Carnegie's bland remark in London that he had $285,000,000 yet to give away was accepted as a taunt by the laboring men on his pay-rolls and now the Carnegie wheels are still.

OF CURRENT INTEREST.

A Lucky Strike in Oatmeal Water.

"Oatmeal water, 2 cents a glass!" cried a thrifty sidewalk merchant in Philadelphia, one of those hottest days. Crowds of people, men and women alike, surged about him as though at a bargain counter sale, and it was evident that he believed in making hay while the sun shone. "Oatmeal water, 2 cents a glass!" he continued to yell. "Healthful and nutritious! Prescribed by all doctors. Drink oatmeal water and save your lives!" It seemed as though everybody within the sound of his voice had heard of the medicinal qualities of oatmeal water as a hot weather beverage, and the man was simply overwhelmed with customers. Five buckets were emptied in an incredibly short space of time, and he went away for more.

Chicago Man's Scheme.

A Chicago shoe manufacturer who has risen from the bench and is able to look at the shoe business from the point of view of the workman as well as that of the employer and capitalist, is going to found a town on the Susquehanna river in Pennsylvania, in which the cottages will be sold to employes without restriction; they will not be required to become teetotalers or quit tobacco, there will be no Sunday restrictions except those imposed by the general law, and the company will not control the stores, the franchises or the privileges. Several millions are to be spent in opening streets, laying out parks and so on, and it is intended to provide habitations for a population of from 2,000 to 3,000.

Won Promotion With a Camera.

Hugh Douglass Wise, who has been made a captain in the Ninth Regiment, United States Infantry, is the young officer who carried his camera up the hill at San Juan and rendered important service by photographing the position of the enemy. Captain Wise was graduated from West Point in 1891.

Says Sunlight Beats Electricity.

Dr. Niels Finsen of Copenhagen, the discoverer of the new medicinal rays, is a young man, shy, slender, but full of enthusiasm. He says sunlight will do more good in the end than any adaptation of electricity.

To Restock Our Forests.

Secretary Hitchcock announces that he is preparing to organize a forestry bureau in the Interior Department to carry out an extensive system of reforestation, somewhat on the plan successfully pursued in Germany.

Reports to the British Admiralty for 1900 have increased by 272 the number of dangerous rocks and shoals known in the navigable waters of the globe.